

**PATENT APPLICATION  
DOCKET NO. 1039-0014**

**REMARKS**

**Pending Claims**

Claims 8, 10, and 13-19 have been amended herein and claim 24 has been added. Accordingly, claims 8, 10, 11, 13-19, and 24 are pending in the application.

**Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112**

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 15-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The Applicants have amended the claims to clarify the claimed invention.

In claim 15, the Examiner stated that it is unclear what is meant by the trays are made capable of simultaneously being programmed and processed. The Applicants have amended claim 15 to clarify the invention. Therefore, the withdrawal of the § 112 rejection of claim 15 is respectfully requested.

The Examiner stated that claim 16 fails to further limit the scope of the claims because the recitation of a "function" is not read as a positive limitation in an apparatus-type claim. The Applicants have amended claim 16 and dependent claims 17-19 to recite an analysis *unit* rather than an analysis function. Therefore, the withdrawal of the § 112 rejection of claims 16-19 is respectfully requested.

The Examiner stated that in claim 19, it is not understood what a smart base is. The Applicants have amended claim 19 to recite that the system for obtaining and storing responses from a customer of claim 18 further comprises a plurality of base units connected in series to a smart base unit, the smart base unit being the base unit that is connected to the analysis unit. Therefore, the withdrawal of the § 112 rejection of claim 19 is respectfully requested.

**PATENT APPLICATION  
DOCKET NO. 1039-0014****Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103**

On page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 8, 10, 11, 13, and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Crooks et al. (US 5,587,560) in view of Liu et al. (US 2002/0107717 A1). The Examiner stated that Crooks shows every element of claims 8, 10, 11, 13, and 14 except means for taking responses regarding the level of customer satisfaction. This, the Examiner contends, is shown by Liu. The Applicants have amended independent claim 8 to distinguish the invention from Crooks and Liu. The Examiner's reconsideration of amended claim 8 is respectfully requested.

Amended claim 8 recites a system for obtaining and storing responses from a customer regarding a level of customer satisfaction. The system includes a plurality of tip trays that obtain and store customer responses regarding the level of customer satisfaction; and a base unit that collects the responses from the tip trays when the trays are stacked on the base unit. Each of the tip trays includes means within the tray for obtaining and storing responses from the customer regarding the level of customer satisfaction; and means for reporting the stored responses. The reporting means includes a data receptacle that aligns with a data pin on the base unit when the tray is the bottommost tray in the stack of trays, and that aligns with a data pin on a lower tray stacked directly under the tray when the tray is not the bottommost tray in the stack of trays. In this configuration, the base unit collectively downloads customer responses from all of the stacked trays.

Crooks and Liu fail to teach or suggest stacking a plurality of tip trays on top of each other, a data receptacle on each tray that aligns with a data pin on the base unit when the tray is the bottommost tray in the stack of trays, and that aligns with a data pin on a lower tray stacked directly under the tray when the tray is not the bottommost tray in the stack of trays, and collectively downloading customer responses from all of the stacked trays by the base unit. Therefore, the withdrawal of the rejection and the allowance of amended claim 8 is respectfully requested.

Claims 10, 11, 13, and 14 depend from amended claim 8 and recite further limitations in combination with the novel and unobvious elements of claim 8. Therefore, the allowance of claims 10, 11, 13, and 14 is respectfully requested.

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On page 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 15-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Crooks in view of Liu and further in view of Winch et al. (US 6,310,783). Regarding claim 15, the Examiner stated that Crooks and Liu show every element of claim 15 except vertically stacking the trays using pins. The Examiner contends this is shown by Winch except that the pins are horizontal. Thus, the Examiner argues, it would be obvious to modify Crooks to vertically stack the trays as taught by Winch, and to structure the pins as taught by Winch to vertically contact the base station. The Applicants respectfully disagree.

Although Winch shows a plurality of battery packs and power modules that are vertically arranged in a cabinet, the individual units do not contact each other. Instead, each unit plugs into a common back plane in the cabinet. Each slot in the cabinet has terminal connectors at the back, and the battery packs and power modules have terminals 50 that plug into the connectors. (Col. 4, lines 8-13; FIG. 4). This is very different from the claimed tip trays, which pass data and electrical power for recharging directly through other tip trays in the stack. Thus, the units in Winch do not have the structure or functionality of the claimed tip trays.

The claimed tip trays stack directly on top of each other in direct electrical contact. They include electrical contacts that enable each tray to be recharged while also passing on charging power to other trays in the stack. This feature is not taught or suggested by Winch. In addition, the claimed tip trays include data contacts that enable the trays to be collectively programmed with survey questions, and collectively downloaded to report the survey information. This can be done while the trays are being simultaneously recharged. These features are not taught or suggested by Crooks, Liu, or Winch. Therefore, the withdrawal of the rejection and the allowance of amended claim 15 are respectfully requested.

Claims 16-19 depend from amended claim 15 and recite further limitations in combination with the novel and unobvious elements of claim 15. Therefore, the allowance of claims 16-19 is respectfully requested.

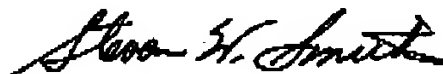
**PATENT APPLICATION  
DOCKET NO. 1039-0014****New Claim**

New claim 24 has been added to recite a method corresponding to apparatus-type claim 8. This claim is not patentably distinct from claim 8, and is not directed to subject matter withdrawn in the response to restriction requirement filed 4/18/2004. The allowance of claim 24 is respectfully requested for the reasons discussed above for claim 8.

**Conclusion**

For all the above reasons, the Applicants respectfully request the allowance of claims 8, 10, 11, 13-19, and 24 and the passing of this application to issue.

Respectfully submitted,



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